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# ASSESSMENT GUIDE ON FATHER-INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

A tool to guide agencies in assessing their capacity to effectively welcome and serve fathers

#### **Assessment Guide Instructions**

This Assessment Guide on Father Inclusive Practices is intended to serve and a discussion guide and self-assessment tool for management and staff for an agency to apply to the operations of services and programs.

The guide allows the reader to determine what level of compliance, if any, is desired across a range of measures that may be applied to an agency that is attempting to enhance its capacity to effectively recruit and serve fathers and men in families.

The guide is divided into seven domains that include *Organizational Philosophy, Physical Environment, Policies* and *Procedures, Staff Orientation and Training, Program Content, Marketing Strategies* and *Outreach Efforts*.

Each Domain contains a series of indicators that the reader may respond with one of five options: *Not Appropriate; Never Attempted; Planning Stage; Partially Implemented and Fully Implemented.* Agency management typically gives direction and attention to those indicators that are preferred and determine those indicators that are deemed as not appropriate.

The guide was developed with the plan that there would be no minimum or passing score, but that each agency would determine that preferred level of compliance that best reflects their organizational reality. Previous experience with the Assessment Guide has found that readers' response has typically focused upon each indicator's desirability, feasibility and affordability.

Please note: those indicators followed by an asterisk (\*) will require information to be attached or recorded on a separate report sheet provided at the end of the document.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Agency clearly promotes the importance of father inclusion, but not at the expense of mothers/women.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Administration has posted and implemented policies and procedures that encourage staff to employ father-friendly practices across the agency					
Designated funding, resources and staff are maintained at level to effectively serve fathers*					
Review of gender-specific programs has been completed to determine if their focus reflects their intent*					
Periodic staff development is provided to upgrade new personnel on attitudes about accepting and including fathers in services provision					
Working partnership are established with wide range of community resources that provide services to fathers*					
All staff are expected to share the responsibility for inviting and engaging fathers in programs/activities					
Agency is flexible in service development for fathers					
Agency is flexible in service implementation for fathers					
Selected services are provided specifically for fathers, as well as men who fulfill father figure roles, unless contraindicated					

#### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Agency promotes an environment that clearly states "fathers are welcome here." Environment reflects a male presence (although not exclusively) in waiting area, program space, workrooms, offices and classrooms.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Positive portrayals of men and children and provided in photos and/or posters					
Positive portrayals of men and children are provided on bulletin boards					
Positive portrayals of men and children are provided on display racks					
Reading materials (books, magazines, literature) displayed for clients are directed toward fathers and men					
A diaper deck is provided in the men's restroom					
Space is provided for fathers to calm/soothe the child while waiting for service/assistance					
Books, journals, articles, videos and other materials directed toward fathers are provided in agency/office lending libraries for clients					
Books, journals, articles, videos and other materials directed toward fathers are provided in staff resource rooms.					
If television shows or videos are provided for the public viewing in program space/waiting areas, some are offered that are directed toward fathers/men					

#### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Agency has written policies and procedures in place that clearly address fathers as clients.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Each division/program has identified one staff member to coordinate in-house father inclusion efforts, as well as to respond to community requests regarding media and agency inquires about fathers and fatherhood					
Intake forms, applications and questionnaires are gender neutral, as appropriate*					
Fathers/men are invited to participate in meaningful conversation when staff contact clients by telephone or in person at home visits					
Information is presented in ways that match men's learning styles, i.e., hands —on, interactive, visually engaging, with opportunities for discussion and open debate					
Fathers are offered opportunities to shape existing and emerging service provision and development on a regular basis					
Fathers' participation is encouraged in agency activities unless there are documented reasons for not doing so*					
Male volunteers are recruited on similar bass with female volunteers (especially in non-traditional roles)					
Personnel policies are maintained and updated to be gender-fair and balanced					

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** (continued)

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Internal process is in place to actively refer fathers having difficulty paying child support to employers seeking applicants and to job training providers					
Policy is established that offers staff assistance to organizations requesting agency representation on advisory boards regarding fatherhood issues					
Male program graduates are recruited to serve in a wide range of advisory and volunteer capacities					
Staff is encouraged to cooperate with the child's other parent in service provision (unless substantiated abuse has occurred)					
Gender-specific policies and procedures have been examined to determine if their focus reflects their actual intent*					
Fathers are invited to participate in all general client activities and programs, not just in traditional male roles					

#### STAFF ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Staff present workplace message that fathers are important and capable. Staff also present attitude that agency services should be available to fathers on a regular basis.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
A welcoming attitude is exhibited toward fathers entering agency/program					
A welcoming attitude is exhibited toward fathers requesting services					
A welcoming attitude is exhibited toward fathers using services					
Staff displays comfort in discussing barriers that fathers must address					
Capacity to effectively work with fathers is included in staff recruitment, hiring and performance reviews and in volunteer recruitment, interviewing and evaluations					
Staff indicate interest in balancing interactions with both mothers and fathers in interviews, intakes and service development and delivery					
Staff recognize and avoid language that is divisive and stereotyping by gender					
Staff exhibit non-judgmental attitudes but indicate they have high expectations of clientele					
Father's input is sought in situations involving decision- making in important aspects of their children's lives					

# **STAFF ORIENTATION & TRAINING (Continued)**

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
In-service training programs are provided to educate the staff about internal and external resources and to measure staff performance based on referrals made					
Staff is open to receiving constructive criticism regarding their personal biases regarding gender, race and class issues					
Staff have received training in:					
Recognizing and respecting gender differences in communication styles					
Recognizing and respecting paternal and maternal parenting approaches					
Understanding male and female learning styles					
Use of evaluation forms and techniques to measure client progress in fatherhood programs					
Other training as appropriate					

### PROGRAM CONTENT

# Selected programs and services have been established to specifically address the needs of father and men in families.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Services that employ an asset approach with fathers and utilized, rather than a deficit approach					
Selected services are provided specifically for fathers on a regular basis*					
Programs and activities are scheduled at times that are convenient for fathers to attend and participate					
Staff composition in gender reflects the population that the agency is attempting to serve*					
Staff composition in culture reflects the population that the agency is attempting to serve*					
Staff composition in language reflects the population that the agency is attempting to serve					
Staff composition in class/socioeconomic status reflects the population that the agency is attempting to serve					
Activities, materials and individual and group exercises are employed that appeal to father sand men					
Qualified men are recruited to address sensitive issues that involve father's concerns, i.e., family violence, access/visitation/custody, co-parenting, sexual harassment, child support, divorce, etc.					

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# PROGRAM CONTENT (continued)

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Office space is provided to workforce development and/or education and training providers to coordinate services to assist fathers in meeting financial obligations					
Fathers are surveyed periodically by staff to determine their needs, concerns and interests*					
Special events are sponsored that periodically celebrate fatherhood and men in families, as appropriate*					
Resource list(s) provided contain information relevant for fathers (e.g., Dad's Directory, housing for fathers and children, etc.)					
Parenting curricula and educational materials are used that reflect the diversity of the fathers to be served					
Assistance is offered to help fathers address their capacity to balance their work, family, friends, hobbies and free time					
Resources for fathers include mental health supports that address depression, grief and loss, anger management, etc.					
Resources for fathers include family formation options: marriage, co-parenting, etc.					
Staff speakers' bureau is maintained that actively seeks opportunities to inform and educate the local and regional public about agency programs and services					

# PROGRAM CONTENT (continued)

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Fathers are invited to participate in full range of agency/program activities: classes, groups, parties, childcare, field trips, outings, celebrations and other events					
Fathers are encouraged to pursue win/win opportunities in problem-solving and parenting approaches (e.g. mediation over litigation)					
Activities are offered to strengthen father-child relationships					
Fathers who are having difficulty paying child support are offered the option to participate in education and training programs					
Level of father/male involvement is monitored to recognize their gains and accomplishments					
Effective evaluation tools and techniques are employed to measure client progress in fathers' programs, on a regular basis					

#### **MARKETING STRATEGIES**

# Agency's marketing plan includes content indicating positive approaches to recruiting and serving fathers.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Marketing plan addressing service provision to fathers is clear, focused and feasible					
Agency is perceived by the community at large as father-friendly, or attempting to be so					
Literature clearly indicates the agency's commitment to serving fathers*					
Brochures and other marketing materials present positive portrayals of fathers and children (fathers with daughters and with sons)					
Program descriptions use language that attracts and appeals to fathers and men in families*					
Marketing materials accurately reflect the population of clients agency is attempting to recruit and serve*					
Marketing materials are regularly placed in locations that fathers/men frequent*					
Marketing materials avoid negative stereotypes of fathers by culture, age, class, gender and income					

# ${\bf MARKETING\ STRATEGIES\ }(continued)$

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Agency advertising is placed in father-oriented publications and locations					
Marketing materials avoid employing "gender wars" approaches to promote their service delivery					
Father-friendly marketing materials are periodically sent to custodial and noncustodial parents					

#### **OUTREACH EFFORTS**

### Agency's outreach plan specifically includes fathers/family men.

ACTION: For each indicator, place a checkmark in the box that is most indicative of your agency	NOT APPROPRIATE	NEVER ATTEMPTED	PLANNING STAGE	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Outreach plan addressing service provision to fathers is clear, focused and feasible					
Outreach staff are sensitive to needs of fathers of diverse cultures, ages, classes, languages, backgrounds and income levels					
Outreach staff reflect the clients they are attempting to recruit and serve					
Outreach staff are provided with ample resources t identify and reach their clients					
Outreach workers visit locations where fathers usually can be found with children: auto body shops, gyms, basketball courts, bait shops, barber shops, bowling alleys, ball fields, parks, churches/temples, sports stadiums, snowmobile clubs, etc.					
Outreach workers visit locations where children can be found with their fathers: schools, arcades, movie theaters, malls, pet shops, restaurants, grocery stores, etc					
Outreach staff approach fathers/men in respectful and supportive ways					
Outreach staff recognize family, cultural and institutional barriers that may limit father engagement					

<b>DOMAIN</b>	INDICATOR	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	Designated funding, resources and staff are maintained at level to effectively serve fathers	
	Review of gender-specific programs has been completed to determine if their focus reflects their intent	

DOMAIN ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	INDICATOR  Working partnership are established with wide range of community resources that provide services to fathers	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
POLICIES & PROCEDURES	Intake forms, applications and questionnaires are gender neutral, as appropriate	
	Fathers' participation is encouraged in agency activities unless there are documented reasons for not doing so	

<b>DOMAIN</b>	INDICATOR	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
POLICIES & PROCEDURES	Gender-specific policies and procedures have been examined to determine if their focus reflects their actual intent	
PROGRAM CONTENT	Selected services are provided specifically for fathers on a regular basis	
	Staff composition in gender reflects the population that agency is attempting to serve	

<b>DOMAIN</b>	INDICATOR	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
PROGRAM	Staff composition in culture reflects the	
CONTENT	population that agency is attempting to serve	
	Activities, materials and individual and group	
	exercises are employed that appeal to father	
	sand men	
	Qualified men are recruited to address sensitive issues that involve father's concerns,	
	i.e., family violence, access/visitation/custody,	
	co-parenting, sexual harassment, child support,	
	divorce, etc.	

<b>DOMAIN</b>	INDICATOR	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
PROGRAM	Fathers are surveyed periodically by staff to	
CONTENT	determine their needs, concerns and interests	
	Special events are sponsored that periodically	
	celebrate fatherhood and men in families, as	
	appropriate	
MARKETING	Literature clearly indicates the agency's	
STRATEGIES	commitment to serving fathers	
	Brochures and other marketing materials	
	present positive portrayals of fathers and	
	children (fathers with daughters and with sons)	

<b>DOMAIN</b>	INDICATOR	EVIDENCE/INFORMATION
MARKETING	Marketing materials accurately reflect the	
STRATEGIES	population of clients agency is attempting to	
	recruit and serve	
	Marketing materials are regularly placed in	
	locations that fathers/men frequent	